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Public Information: Nena Terrell +231 (0)77 054 826

Email: nterrell@usaid.gov

FACT SHEET

SUPPORT FOR LIBERIA'S RECONSTRUCTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Peaceful elections held in October and November 2005 and the inauguration of the president, the first African woman Head of State, in January 2006, ushered in a period of hope and high expectations for recovery and development after decades of poor governance and destabilization. Nevertheless, the consequences of 14 years of brutal conflict (1989-2003) constitute huge challenges to Liberia's recovery, reform and rebuilding process. Central and local governments that collapsed require support to secure law and order, administer justice, provide basic services such as water, electricity and road maintenance, restore health and education systems, and generate employment. The government of Liberia with the aid of international partners, of which the US is the largest bilateral donor, is endeavoring to simultaneously restore public confidence in political, social, economic and judicial institutions while addressing the regional disparity and bad governance that contributed to the conflict. Liberia emerged from the war with shattered administrative, economic, health and education capacities due to the flight of qualified professionals and widespread damage to infrastructure. The majority of the population, outside limited areas of the capital city, has no access to electricity and sanitation. Prospects for sustainable development relies on the resiliency of the Liberian people, governance reforms, and the natural endowment of the country with tremendous agricultural potential and rich in iron ore, bauxite, rubber, timber, precious minerals, and potentially, offshore oil reserves.

USAID PROGRAMS REVITALIZE COMMUNITIES AND CONSOLIDATE PEACE

Working across nearly all fifteen counties of Liberia to aid the transition from relief to development, USAID has focused on the creation of economic and social conditions at the community level to reintegrate internally displaced people, ex-combatants and the general population affected by the war through job creation, reconstruction of roads, schools, and hospitals, reviving and initiating agricultural production, expanding access to schooling for overage

and primary school children, training health, education and other government personnel, and delivering an integrated package of essential health services for child survival, maternal health, malaria and HIV/AIDS. To help consolidate the foundation for peace and economic development, USAID's democracy and governance program

US Government Assistance in Liberia Estimated FY 2008 (USD millions)

- Promoting peace and security \$56,345,000
- Advancing good governance and democracy \$22,700,000
- Expanding access to essential education and health services and social protection for vulnerable populations \$54,800,000
- Supporting economic growth \$28,527,000



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supports the justice system, human rights, and economic governance as well as the strengthening of the multi-party electoral system. Other US government assistance supports the development and training of new military and civilian police forces.

GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

USAID provided support for the 2005 presidential and legislative elections and continued support for political party development, legislative process and anti-corruption reforms, is helping to build a more representative and competitive multi-party system. The program supports electoral systems and preparations for local, and municipal and by-elections, as well as refurbishment of buildings to house the national and local electoral commissions. USAID also contributes to strengthening local government capacity, including through the rehabilitation of County Administrative buildings in ten counties. Civil society organizations receive support to increase their public advocacy activities related to elections, corruption, conflict mitigation, and human rights. Peace-building and mediation law programs through 2007, including support to the ongoing Truth and Reconciliation Commission, expanded the numbers of mediators and peace advocates and encouraged communities to interact and resolve problems without resorting to violence. Through the Government Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP), USAID contributions to rule of law and economic governance help create the necessary conditions for the economy to grow and complement other US support for judicial sector reform.

COUNTRY FACTS

- Comprehensive Peace Agreement 2003
- Legislative/Presidential elections 2005
- Population: 3.4 Million
- Life Expectancy: (2005) 44.7 years
- Literacy: 37%
- HIV/AIDS Prevalence (2007) urban 2.5, rural 0.8
- Growth Rate (2006) 7%
- Income per capita (2005) \$130

Sources: World Bank, UN, and LISGIS Data

ECONOMIC GROWTH: AGRICULTURE, ENERGY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO REINTEGRATE COMMUNITIES

Liberia's agriculture sector, including forestry, is critical to the economic development of the country and provides livelihoods to some 70% of the population. The USAID program focuses on conservation of protected areas, agro-forestry, land tenure, the rehabilitation of smallholder tree crop farms of rubber, cocoa, and oil palm, restocking of decimated food animals with improved species, road construction, and training in business and marketing skills including micro-credit and small enterprise initiatives. PL480 Title II Food for Peace funds provide a non-emergency food aid program for vulnerable groups and school children at risk of dropping out of school.

In cooperation with the USDA Forest Service, USAID is providing support to improve policies on natural resource management and increasing the transparent and legitimate use, ownership, and commercialization of timber, forest products, mineral, fisheries and the protection of Liberia's unique biodiversity.



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Energy is critical to improving economic livelihoods and to economic growth and also to restoring public confidence in government. USAID supported an Emergency Power Program to extend electricity to sections of the capital city and now supports longer term power generation throughout the country through energy sector reforms designed to attract private sector investment. Additionally, USAID is piloting renewable, alternative energy projects in rural settings.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: EDUCATION

Decades of poor governance and civil war devastated Liberia's formal public education system and created a tremendous need for informal, accelerated learning opportunities for ex-combatant and noncombatant youth and young adults. Major investments in education, including assistance from the US President's Africa Education Initiative and International Education Initiative, are increasing school enrollments and improving the quality of education through sector planning and restructuring, teacher training and the provision of needed equipment, material and infrastructure rehabilitation. USAID support for workforce development aims to fill gaps in human resource capacity, as many professionals have not benefited from advanced training and skills development in more than 15 years. Capacity-building support is extending to tertiary level institutions in 2008. USAID provides technical assistance and equipment to the Ministry of Education to enhance the institution's monitoring and evaluation capabilities.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: HEALTH

Devastated health facilities and a diminished health care workforce are major challenges to the Government of Liberia in providing basic health care and organizing services. Women and newborns are at particular risk due to high fertility, the threat of malaria, HIV/AIDS, poor sanitation and hygiene, and lack of safe birthing services. These are evidenced by the very high rate of maternal mortality, frequent disease outbreaks, and the endemic prevalence of HIV/AIDS. USAID is supporting and strengthening public and nongovernmental providers to deliver a basic package of essential health services-- covering maternal and child health, malaria, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS--to underserved areas of the country. Other USAID health sector support contributes to national health planning, training of health professionals, refurbishing facilities including the Tubman National Institute of Medical Arts (TNIMA), Liberia's largest training institution for non-physician health workers. Due to the high incidence of malaria, Liberia is a focus country for the US President's Malaria Initiative.

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